Allocation of funds for ancient and historical buildings in hilly States

2359. SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Finance Commission have allocated any funds for upkeep of several ancient and historical buildings in the Hilly States, particularly in Uttaranchal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the State Governments of Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh have submitted any action plan to Central Government in this behalf; and

(d) if so, the amount Government have sanctioned/released to each State mentioned above so far during 2005-2006 for conservation and protected monuments, till date?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Twelfth Finance Commission (TFC) has recommended allocation of Rs. 5 crores covering the period between 2005-06 to 2009-2010 to the state of Uttaranchal for heritage conservation.

(c) No action plans in this regard have been received from the State Governments of Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh.

(d) The details of funds provided for conservation of centrally protected monuments in the States of Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh during 2005-06 are as under:—

Uttaranchal Rs. 175.45 lakhs

Himachal Pradesh Rs. 137.57 lakhs

The Twelfth Finance Commission has not recommended any allocation for the year 2005-06.

Inflow of foreign tourists

2360. SHRIMATI S.G INDIRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that number of foreign tourists visiting the country has been decreasing day-by-day due to prevailing law and order problem being faced by the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have called upon the

developed countries to take precautions while issuing travel advisories concerning India; and

(c) if so, the response received by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir. The foreign tourist arrivals to India during 2005 reached the level of 3.92 million as against 3.46 million in 2004, registering a growth of 13.2%.

(b) and (c) As and when required, the Department of Tourism takes up the matter with the Ministry of External Affairs for apprising foreign missions in India as also the foreign Governments, through the Indian Missions abroad, requesting for not issuing any adverse travel advisories due to sporadic incidents of law & order or terrorism. Indiatourism offices abroad also coordinate with Indian Missions and Travel/Tour operators, to counter any adverse publicity on this account. The response is generally positive.

Maintenance of ancient heritage sites

2361. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any complaint that the maintenance of ancient heritage has not been possible due to financial crisis;

(b) whether it is a fact that ancient monument of Sanchi, Vidisha, Khajuraho etc. are dilapidating during rainy season; and

(c) if so, the measures being taken by Government in this regard, particularly for famous Bodh pilgrim Sanchi?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI); (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) No leakage during rainy season is reported in the group of monuments at Khajuraho. However at Sanchi during the conservation works undertaken at the stupa by Sir John Marshall between 1912-1919, weep holes were provided for draining out the percolated rain water. Seepage through the weep holes is a normal process and is a prerequisite to save the structure from damage.

There is no damage to the Sanchi stupa.